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ABSTRACT

This booklet was designed to help supervisors with employee training problems. The problems may relate to upgrading job knowledge and skills or other training areas. The supervisor can share the training workload with fellow supervisors, the larger organization, and the personnel officer. Knowledge of an enthusiasm for the training subject will also aid him. The supervisor needs to observe, analyze, and measure employee production and to determine what is expected of employees before he can train toward a defined level. He attempts to select methods consonant with the trainee's background and abilities. The supervisor makes rough training plans, invites appropriate input, and then draws up specific training plans. His on-the-job training methods follow four steps: prepare, tell, show, and follow up. The supervisor joins trainees in making the training worthwhile, and he evaluates during and following training to measure training effects. The supervisor assists employees in developing insight to cope with change. Employee skills training is necessary, but supervisory training is just as necessary. Personnel management areas, valuable in supervisory training, include equal employment opportunity, labor-management relations, etc. The training quantity and quality is largely dependent on the supervisor's leadership. (CSS)

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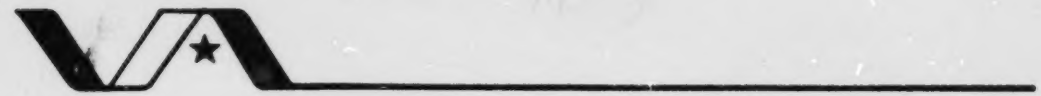

common sense about training

points for supervisors

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● training problems

If you are a new supervisor, you may have already begun to suspect that supervisors have problems. If you have been a supervisor for some time, you know that they do.

● what people need

Many of the problems you face every day may relate to training and the need to —

- give new employees the right start,
- upgrade the skills of current employees,
- do new types of work,
- deal with employees who need to improve work attitudes,
- help employees reach their potential,
- avoid undesirable turnover,
- improve job knowledge,
- reduce costs by doing things better,
- and understand how to be a good supervisor.

Training is a matter of effectively and efficiently helping people learn what they need to know. Training your people so that they can do their work satisfactorily is essential to achieving the goals of your unit. It is part of your job.

● sharing the workload

But you don't have to do it all yourself. Much of the training that the people in your unit need may be conducted by the larger organization you work for . . . your section or division or service.

Some of your training workload may be shared with your fellow supervisors in other ways. How this is done depends on what your station Training and Development Committee has arranged.

You will also receive assistance from your Personnel Officer. . . including information about how to identify training needs, how to determine the cost and value of training, and how to meet any technical requirements.

● knowledge and enthusiasm

When you do your own training, remember the most important things you need are—

. . .knowledge of what you are teaching. . .and enthusiasm for your subject.

Any supervisor can develop these. After that, the rest will be easier than you might think. Keep some of these tips in mind. . .

Training is often proposed when a problem has arisen. But look a little closer. *Is it really a training problem?* Or is it a matter of—

Lack of equipment,
Inadequate space,
Poor communication,
Bad methods,
Employee relations?

Remember that training is no magic potion. It's not always the only answer. It's not always the best answer. It may not even be the answer.

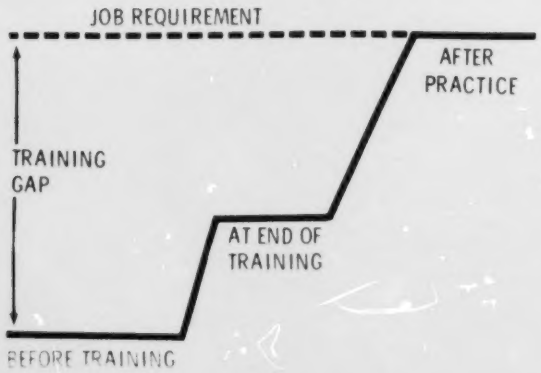
● training can pay off

It is important to train where the training is needed. It is just as important to train where the training will pay off. There are two starting points.

- What are the tasks that your employees have to do, and how well must they do them?
- How well are the employees doing these tasks?

A gap between the two—what is expected and what you are getting—is the area of training needs. Observation and analysis can help you make this determination. Management requests, personnel records, reports on work done, and long-range plans can also provide signals.

LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY



You should train toward a level from which the trainee can advance to what is expected. Proficiency should, of course, improve with experience. Having determined the training needs, the next steps are to identify, to the extent you can,—

- In specific terms what you want to train the employee to do, and
- In measurable terms what the trainee must do to demonstrate that he or she can do it.

choosing an approach

Select the best approach or approaches to training. Find out the relative advantages of different training methods such as—

On-the-job training
Prepackaged courses
Workshop
Coaching
Job rotation
Lecture
Conference
Programed instruction
Individual study
Observation
Demonstration
Role-playing
Or several of these.

In selecting methods, *consider carefully the background and ability of your trainees.* Can they work at the same speed, or do you need to choose training that each can follow independently at his or her own pace? Bear in mind that trainee differences require trainer flexibility.

planning

Prepare a rough training plan. . .one that answers these questions—

Who?
What?
Where?
When?
How?

Obtain input from your own supervisor, your own employees, and anyone else you feel might be helpful. Sometimes trainees can help plan training. Ask trainees questions about their jobs. Their answers can clarify their needs and also motivate

them for training. Course content can also reflect research, your own experience, and the experience of others.

Decide on the best schedule, the most practical training techniques, the use of visual and other aids, and appropriate training facilities.

Draw up your actual training plan so that students will identify with real-life solutions to problems as they are motivated by the training process.

● on-the-job training

For any on-the-job training you undertake, follow the four-step method—

Prepare
Tell
Show
Followup

At the same time, show your students you are interested in your subject and in their progress. Recognize good work. Your comments should be appreciative but honest. Do not encourage slipshod performance.

You can help employees develop initiative by discussing with them upcoming tasks and how to handle them. You can help them perform by raising questions they can answer.

● the formula

Whatever training approach you do choose, always apply this formula—

TRAINING = TEACHING + EVALUATION

Whether you work with a group or one to one, *you and the trainees must join together to make training worthwhile.* In fact, good training is a cooperative venture. Top management, staff and line employees, and the trainee all contribute to the status and direction of training. And this effort helps stimulate trainees' interest in organization goals and achievement as well as in their own skills or techniques. You, the trainer, can show the relevancy of organizational and trainee goals.

Evaluation comes last but not least. *You have to check during training and at the end of training to make sure "it's getting through."* You do this by using the measurements you previously determined would demonstrate that learning has occurred—such as passing tests, solving cases, or performing tasks. In addition, you have to follow up afterwards to make sure training is put into practice. Most people think training ends when they have learned to do the job. But *effective training must also emphasize the need to think..*

People need to know the "why" behind things. They need to know the relationships between what they are doing and what others are doing.

● developing insight

They need to develop the kind of insight that will enable them to deal with change.

Use of such training tools as roleplaying, simulation, buzz sessions, and guided discussions can help. Some straight lecture or panel discussions can provide data on how trainees fit into their organizations and let them know they count.

● skills training

If you are like most supervisors, you can see the reason for training your people, especially in their technical functions.

You have to do this type of training. Otherwise the need for it will show.

● supervisory training

You might not be quite so interested in supervisory training. . .either for yourself or (if you're at a higher level) for the supervisors under you. However, *supervisory training is just as necessary*.

You know, of course, that certain amounts of supervisory training are required for new firstline supervisors. . .40 hours in the first 6 months and 40 more within the next year and a half.

General supervisory training has to do with those skills and knowledges required in practically all supervisory positions regardless of technical function. When you think about it, no matter where you work, you probably need to know more about—

Personnel management areas such as equal employment opportunity and labor-management relations. . .

Principles and methods of communication. . .
Motivation and human behavior. . .
Planning to match employees with job requirements. . .
Basic supervision and management theories. . .
Concepts of organization, formal and informal. . .
Problemsolving and decisionmaking. . .
Means of evaluation. . .
Using personnel management to achieve cost reduction and to improve the quality of life in the work place.

All Right.

You're convinced!

What do you do about it?

● if you're a chief

If you're a division or service chief—
Make a tentative analysis of your training needs. . .
Talk your situation over with your Personnel Officer. . .
Work out a plan for the strictly technical training your people need. . .
And with the help of the Personnel Officer and the Training and Development Committee, prepare a schedule for participation in other kinds of general training.

● if your boss is chief

If you're working under a division or service chief, get together and talk things over—
Gather the facts you need. . .
Obtain as much input as possible. . .Set up a training schedule fitted to your work situation. . .
Stick to it.

● special note

A few words for those at the top—The *quantity and quality of training* at your station are pretty much determined by the extent of your own leadership. . .personal interest. . . and support. It's an area where *one ounce of example is worth pounds of memos.*

An active training program, supervisory and nonsupervisory, shows all your employees—

That they are important people whose skills are worth developing. . .

That their work is important. . .

That management wants to assist employees with potential to move upward. . .

That management is interested in bringing about high levels of efficiency.

● the training dividends

Veterans Administration supervisors can be sure that—

Effective training helps a station operate effectively.

Supervisory leadership can produce and maintain useful training programs.

Training is a keystone investment that can pay big dividends—

To trainees. . .

To your station. . .

To the whole VA. . .

And most important, to those they serve—veterans and their families.

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